

DOCUMENT RESUME

05029 - [n0445338]

[Use of Helicopters in the Thirteenth Coast Guard District for Emergency Medical Services]. CED-78-54; B-114851. February 10, 1978. 1 pp. + enclosure (15 pp.).

Report to Rep. John J. McFall, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations: Transportation Subcommittee; by Robert F. Keller, Comptroller General.

Issue Area: Transportation Systems and Policies (2400); Health Programs (1200).

Contact: Community and Economic Development Div.

Budget Function: Commerce and Transportation: Air Transportation (405).

Organization Concerned: Coast Guard; Department of Transportation.

Congressional Relevance: House Committee on Appropriations: Transportation Subcommittee. Rep. John J. McFall.

A review of the use of helicopters in the Thirteenth Coast Guard District to provide emergency medical services in inland areas revealed that: the Coast Guard responds to all bonafide requests for emergency medical services in inland areas when the weather does not prohibit the use of helicopters; the Coast Guard has adequate capability to provide inland emergency medical services; the inland emergency medical missions performed did not interfere with the performance of the Coast Guard's primary missions; and several other agencies, including the Department of Defense, the National Guard, and the Forest Service, also provide helicopter emergency medical services in Oregon and Washington. (Author/HTW)

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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-114851

FEB 10 1978

The Honorable John J. McFall
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Transportation
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

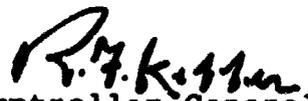
As requested in your letter of August 9, 1977, we reviewed the use of helicopters in the Thirteenth Coast Guard District to provide emergency medical services in inland areas. On January 19, 1978, we briefed your office on our observations on each of the points raised in your letter. In general, we found that in the Thirteenth District:

- The Coast Guard responds to all bonafide requests for emergency medical services in inland areas when the weather does not prohibit the use of helicopters.
- The Coast Guard has adequate capability to provide inland emergency medical services.
- The inland emergency medical missions performed did not interfere with the performance of the Coast Guard's primary missions.
- Several other agencies, including the Department of Defense, the National Guard, and the Forest Service, also provide helicopter emergency medical services in Oregon and Washington.

After the briefing, your office requested that in lieu of a report, we should transmit copies of the exhibits used during the briefing.

As arranged with your office, this letter and the enclosure will be available for general distribution to interested parties.

Sincerely yours,


Acting Comptroller General
of the United States

Enclosure

CED-78-54
(34453)

USE OF HELICOPTERS IN THE 13TH COAST GUARD
DISTRICT FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)

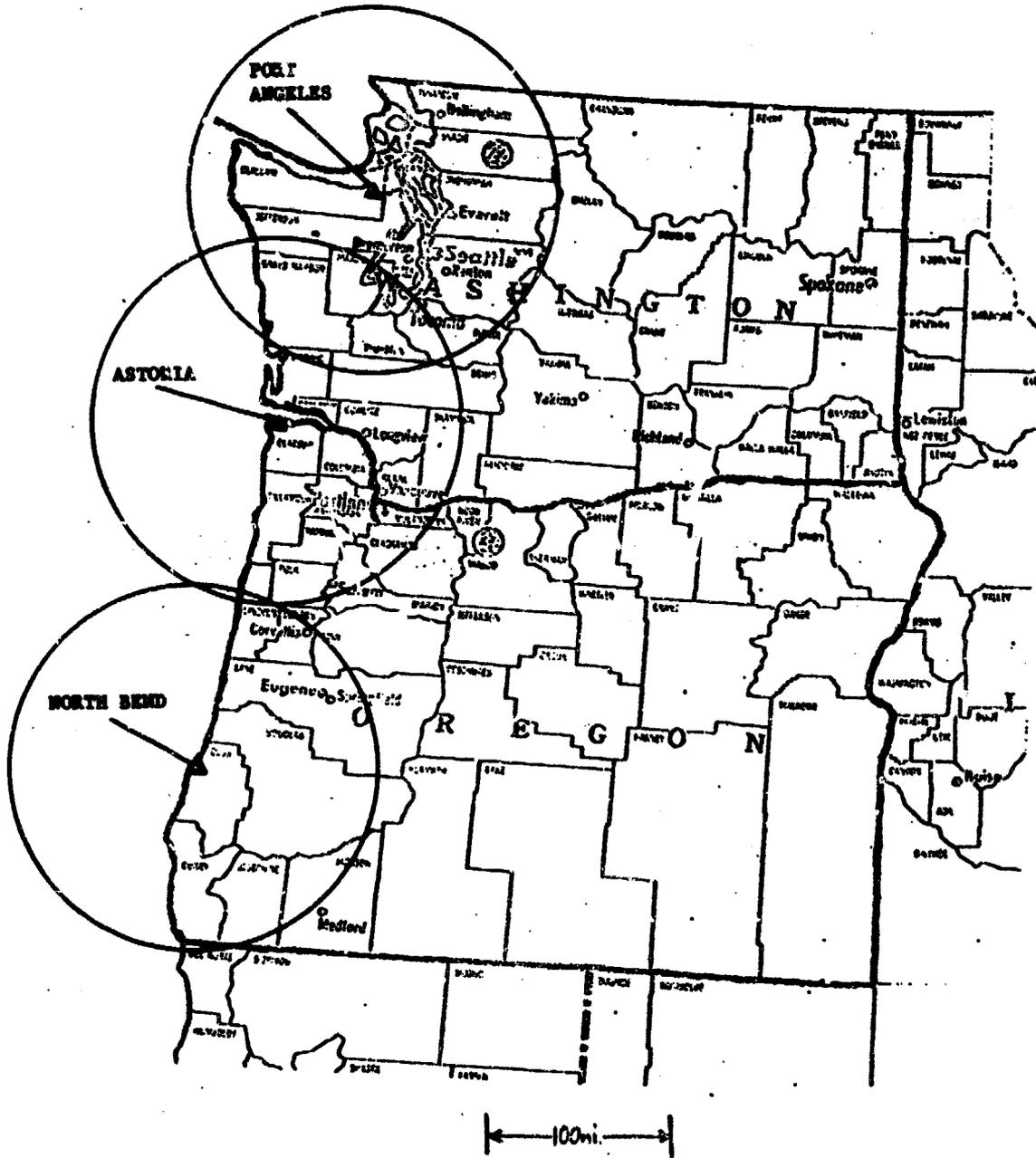
- I. COAST GUARD RESPONDED TO ALL BONAFIDE REQUESTS FOR EMS IN THE 13TH DISTRICT
 - THE 3 AIR STATIONS FLEW 223 INLAND EMS MISSIONS DURING FISCAL YEARS 1976 THROUGH 1977
 - THE NUMBER OF REQUESTS DENIED COULD NOT BE DETERMINED
 - WE FOUND NO INDICATION THAT REQUESTS WERE DENIED FOR ANY REASON OTHER THAN WEATHER
- II. COAST GUARD HAS ADEQUATE CAPABILITY TO PROVIDE INLAND HELICOPTER EMS
 - MEDICALLY TRAINED PERSONNEL WERE GENERALLY AVAILABLE WHEN NEEDED
 - COAST GUARD HELICOPTERS, WHILE NOT SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR EMS, WERE ABLE TO PROVIDE THE SERVICE NEEDED
 - COAST GUARD ON THE AVERAGE RESPONDED TO EMS REQUESTS WITHIN 15 TO 20 MINUTES
- III. EMS INLAND MISSIONS PERFORMED DID NOT INTERFERE WITH PERFORMANCE OF PRIMARY MISSIONS
- IV. SEVERAL OTHER AGENCIES ALSO PROVIDE HELICOPTERS EMS COVERAGE OF OREGON AND WASHINGTON

TYPES OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)

PROVIDED BY HELICOPTER

1. EVACUATION OF ILL OR INJURED PERSONS FROM HIGHWAYS OR REMOTE, INACCESSIBLE, OR ISOLATED LOCATIONS TO A DEFINITIVE MEDICAL CARE FACILITY.
2. TRANSFER OF CRITICALLY INJURED OR ILL PERSONS FROM ONE MEDICAL CARE FACILITY TO ANOTHER WHICH IS MORE CAPABLE OF TREATING THE PARTICULAR CASE.
3. EMERGENCY TRANSPORT OF HUMAN ORGANS FOR TRANSPLANT, BLOOD, MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT, OR MEDICAL PERSONNEL.

COAST GUARD AIR STATIONS
AND SERVICE AREAS



13TH COAST GUARD DISTRICT
 INLAND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
 HELICOPTER RESPONSES-FY 1976 THROUGH FY 1977
 (7/1/75 THROUGH 9/30/77)

	<u>FORT ANGELES</u>	<u>ASTORIA</u>	<u>NORTH BEND</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
EVACUATION FROM SCENE OF ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS TO HOSPITAL	41	13	40	94
HOSPITAL TO HOSPITAL TRANSFER	104	14	8	126
TRANSPORT OF HUMAN BLOOD AND ORGANS, MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES OR MEDICAL TEAMS	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
TOTAL	<u>147</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>223</u>

13TH COAST GUARD DISTRICT
 INLAND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
 HELICOPTER RESPONSES - Z.Y. 1977
 (10/1/76-9/30/77)

	<u>FORT ANGELES</u>	<u>ASTORIA</u>	<u>NORTH BEND</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
EVACUATION FROM SCENE OF ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS TO HOSPITAL.	15	7	16	38
HOSPITAL TO HOSPITAL TRANSFER	34	9	7	70
TRANSPORT OF HUMAN BLOOD AND ORGANS, MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES OR MEDICAL TEAMS	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	<u>70</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>110</u>

13TH COAST GUARD DISTRICT
 INLAND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE
 HELICOPTER RESPONSES - TRANSITION QUARTER
 (7/1/76 - 9/30/76)

	<u>PORT ANGELES</u>	<u>ASTORIA</u>	<u>NORTH BEND</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
EVACUATION FROM SCENE OF ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS TO HOSPITAL	9	2	13	24
HOSPITAL TO HOSPITAL TRANSFER	9	2	1	12
TRANSPORT OF HUMAN BLOOD AND ORGANS, MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES OR MEDICAL TEAMS	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	<u>18</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>36</u>

13TH COAST GUARD DISTRICT
 INLAND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
 HELICOPTER RESPONSES - F.Y. 1976
 (7/1/75-6/30/76)

	<u>PORT ANGELES</u>	<u>ASTORIA</u>	<u>NORTH BEND</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
EVACUATION FROM SCENE OF ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS TO HOSPITAL	17	4	11	32
HOSPITAL TO HOSPITAL TRANSFER	41	3	0	44
TRANSPORT OF HUMAN BLOOD AND ORGANS, MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES OR MEDICAL TEAMS	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	<u>59</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>77</u>

AGENCIES PROVIDING EMS HELICOPTER COVERAGE
OF WASHINGTON AND OREGON

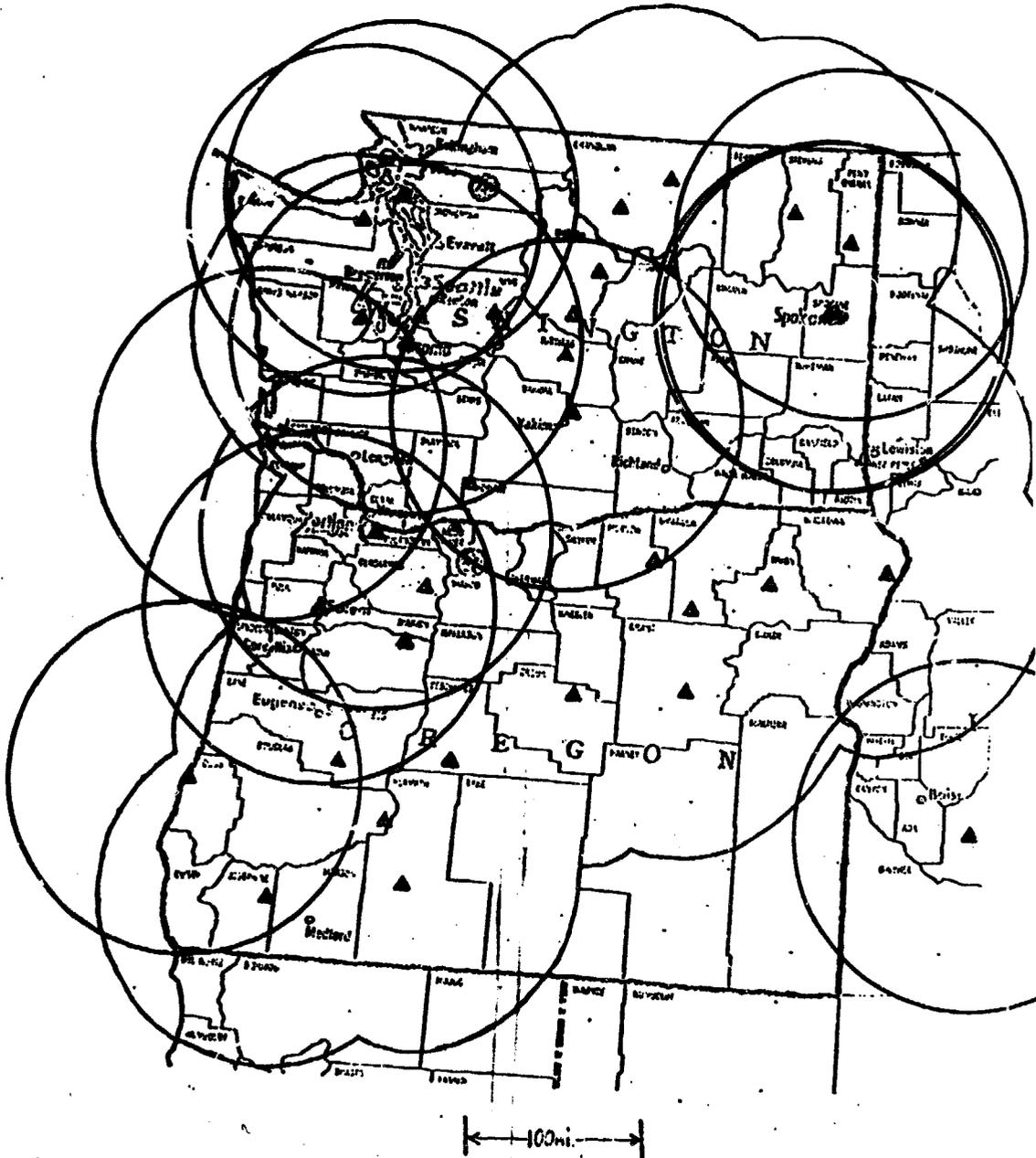
<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF HELICOPTERS</u>
U.S. COAST GUARD	PORT ANGELES, WASHINGTON	3
	ASTORIA, OREGON	3
	NORTH BEND, OREGON	3
U.S. ARMY (MAST)	FORT LEWIS, WASHINGTON YAKIMA FIRING RANGE, WASHINGTON	7
U.S. AIR FORCE (MAST)	FAIRCHILD AFB, SPOKANE, WASHINGTON CUSICK SURVIVAL SCHOOL, WASHINGTON	5
U.S. NAVY	NAVAL AIR STATION, WHIDBEY ISLAND, WASHINGTON	5
U.S. AIR FORCE RESERVE	PORTLAND, OREGON	12
WASHINGTON ARMY NATIONAL GUARD	SPOKANE, WASHINGTON	6
OREGON ARMY NATIONAL GUARD	SALEM, OREGON	8
U.S. FOREST SERVICE	24 LOCATIONS IN OREGON AND WASHINGTON	29
CHELAN COUNTY SHERIFF	CHELAN COUNTY, WASHINGTON	1
SNOHOMISH COUNTY SHERIFF	SNOHOMISH COUNTY, WASHINGTON	3
TOTAL		<u>85</u>

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE MISSIONS
BY HELICOPTER IN INLAND AREAS

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>NUMBER OF MISSIONS</u> ^{1/}
<u>U.S. COAST GUARD, 13TH DISTRICT (FY 1977)</u>	
PORT ANGELES, WA. : 70	
ASTORIA, ORE. : 17	
NORTH BEND, ORE. : <u>23</u>	110
 <u>MAST UNITS (CY 1977)</u>	
<u>FORT LEWIS:</u>	
TACOMA, WA. : 159	
YAKIMA, WA. : <u>78</u>	237
<u>FAIRCHILD AFB, WA.</u>	20
 <u>OTHERS (CY 1977)</u>	
304th ARRS (AFRES), PORTLAND, ORE.	43
OREGON NATIONAL GUARD, SALEM, ORE.	24
WASHINGTON NATIONAL GUARD, SPOKANE, WA.	13
NAVAL AIR STATION, WHIDBEY ISLAND, WA.	50
U.S. FOREST SERVICE (24 LOCATIONS)	31
CHELAN COUNTY SHERIFF, WA.	20
SNOHOMISH COUNTY SHERIFF, WA.	11

^{1/} NUMBER OF COAST GUARD MISSIONS AS DETERMINED BY C/O. NUMBER OF MAST MISSIONS AS REPORTED BY UNIT. NUMBER OF MISSIONS BY OTHERS AS REPORTED OR ESTIMATED BY THE UNIT OR AGENCY.

COAST GUARD, NAVY, MILITARY (NOW-NAVY), AND
U.S. FOREST SERVICE HELICOPTER LOCATIONS
AND EME COVERAGE



COAST GUARD EMTs AVAILABLE AT
13TH DISTRICT AIR STATIONS
(as of December, 1977)

<u>AIR STATION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF EMTs</u>
ASTORIA	26
NORTH BEND	19
PORT ANGELES	<u>17</u>
TOTAL	<u>62</u>

PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS a/ OF COAST GUARD AND MILITARY HELICOPTERS b/ USED TO PROVIDE EMS

HELICOPTER TYPE	NUMBER AVAILABLE BY LOCATION AND (AGENCY)	RANGE (MILES)	CRUISE SPEED	ALTITUDE		PATIENT CAPACITY (NORMAL CONFIGURATION) LITTER + AMBULATORY	HOIST
				MAXIMUM	NORMAL		
HH-52	3 PORT ANGELES, WA. (C.G.)	300	85	10,000	LOW LEVEL (0-2000)	1 2	YES
	3 NORTH BEND, ORE. (C.G.)	"	"	"	"	"	YES
HH-3	3 ASTORIA, ORE. (C.G.)	500	125	10,000	0-6000	2300 POUNDS-(1 LITTER CARRIED ON BOARD)	YES
HH-1 "HUEY" (VARIOUS MODELS)	7 FORT LEWIS, WA. (ARMY)	300	90	12,000	0-12,000	3 4	YES
	12 PORTLAND, ORE. (AFRES)	"	"	"	"	2 5	YES
	6 SPOKANE, WA. (WNG)	"	"	"	"	3 2	YES
	8 SALEM, ORE. (ONG)	"	"	"	"	VARIABLE	NO
"HH-1H "HUEY"	5 FAIRCHILD AFB, WA. (USAF)	300	90	8,000	0-8000	2 5	YES
HH-46	5 NAS WHIDBEY ISLAND, WA. (NAVY)	400	110	15,000	NONE GIVEN	3 12	YES

a/ CHARACTERISTICS SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATIONS PROVIDED BY FLYING PERSONNEL AT THE UNITS SHOWN. SEVERAL FACTORS MAY INFLUENCE THE PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HELICOPTERS. SOME OF THESE FACTORS ARE WEATHER, WEIGHT ON BOARD (INCLUDING FUEL), AND CONFIGURATION OR MODIFICATIONS TO THE AIRCRAFT.

b/ OTHER MODEL HELICOPTERS ARE AVAILABLE AND MAY BE USED FOR SAR OR EMS OPERATIONS AT SOME LOCATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, FORT LEWIS HAS A COMPLEMENT OF "BELL JET RANGER" TYPE HELICOPTERS AND SOME CH-47 "CHINOOK" TYPE HELICOPTERS. THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD HAS 11 OH-58 TYPE HELICOPTERS. HOWEVER, THE HELICOPTER TYPES SHOWN HERE ARE MOST FREQUENTLY USED FOR EMS OPERATIONS.

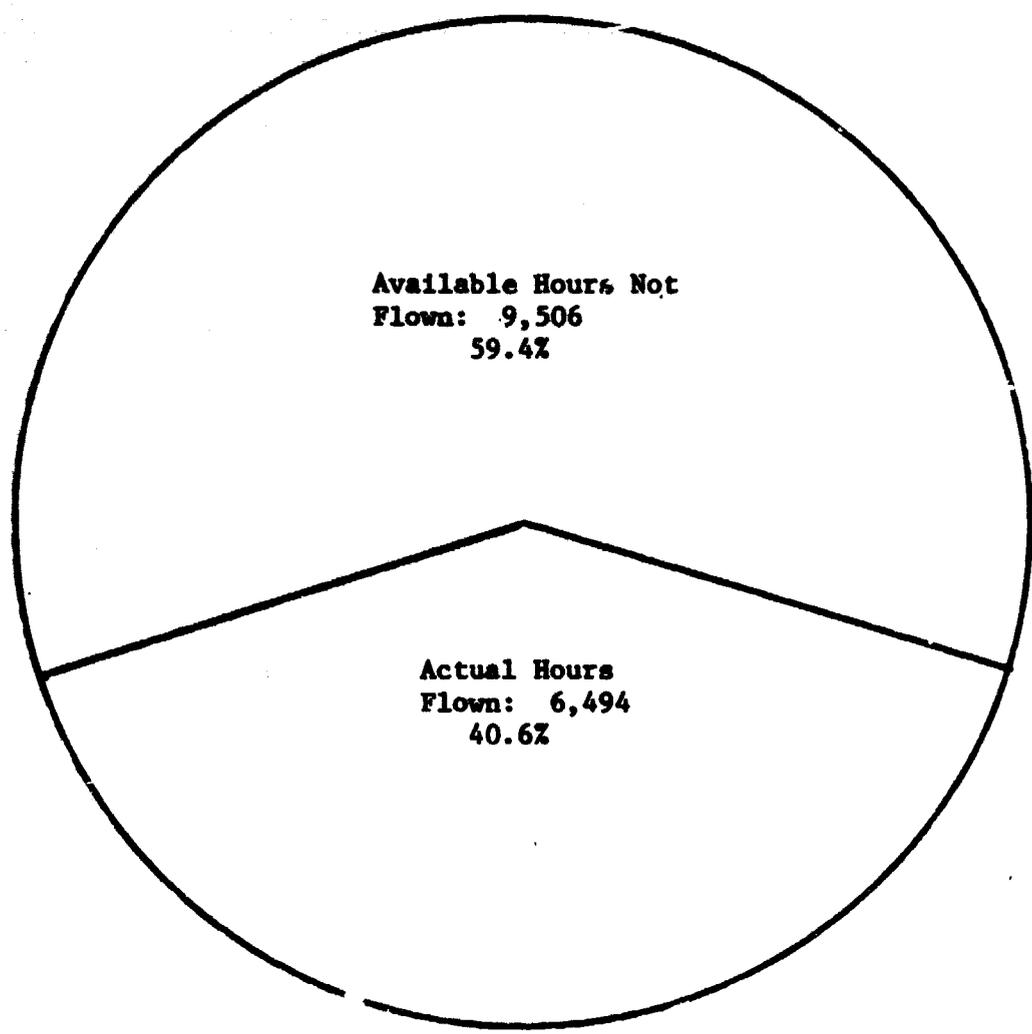
EXHIBIT I

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ALERT (RESPONSE TIME) CAPABILITY MAINTAINED BY
COAST GUARD AND MILITARY UNITS PROVIDING EMS

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ALERT CAPABILITY MAINTAINED</u>		<u>ACTUAL AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME (IN MINUTES)</u>
	<u>NORMAL DUTY HOURS</u> (IN MINUTES)	<u>OTHER TIMES</u> (IN MINUTES)	
<u>COAST GUARD</u>			
A.S. ASTORIA	30	30	15
A.S. NORTH BEND	30	30	15
A.S. PORT ANGELES	30	30	22
<u>MAST</u>			
FORT LEWIS	5	5	NOT DETERMINED
FAIRCHILD AFB	30	150	"
<u>OTHER MILITARY</u>			
N.A.S. WHIDBEY ISLAND	5	30	NOT DETERMINED
304TH ARRS (AFRES)	45	90	"
WASH. NAT. GUARD	20	60	"
ORE. NAT. GUARD	5-10	60-90	"

ACTUAL FLIGHT HOURS AS A PART OF
MAXIMUM AVAILABLE FLIGHT HOURS:
13TH COAST GUARD DISTRICT
(F.Y. 1977)



Total Available Hours: 16,000

ACTUAL FLYING HOURS BY MISSION
13TH COAST GUARD DISTRICT
(FY 1977)

